

NO CHANGE in Class.

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Class. CHANGED TO: TS S C

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Date: 21/03/78 By: 029

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP
INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY Turkey

DATE: 25X1X6

SUBJECT Rumored Visit of Patriarch Alexei to Istanbul

INFO. [REDACTED]

DIST. 13 November 1946

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is hereby referred to
CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the
letter of 10 October 1978 from the
Director of Central Intelligence to the
Archivist of the United States

PAGES

SUPPLEMENT

ORIGIN

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1. The Turkish press recently announced the news of an early visit of Patriarch Alexei to Istanbul, and stated that preparations were now under way to welcome him at the Phanar. The press also indicated that the object of this visit is to unite the Greek and Russian Orthodox Churches and to place them under one religious head, as is the case of the control of the Catholic Church by the Vatican.
2. The Patriarchate, however, formally denies the visit of Patriarch Alexei and indicates that the only news of any prospective visit is that of a special religious delegation (see [REDACTED]) coming with the object of extending congratulations to the Greek Patriarch on the occasion of his election. However, a month has already elapsed since the news of the delegation's proposed visit was received and the necessary preparations were made, and there have been no further developments.* The Patriarchate is beginning to question whether the visit of the delegation will actually take place. Should the delegates arrive, it stands to reason that they may discuss current problems existing between the two Patriarchates, such as the problem of the Churches of Finland, Paris and Czechoslovakia, etc. There could be, however, no question of a unification of the Church of Russia with the Greek Church of the Phanar.
3. Patriarch Maximos has definite ideas on the matter and plans to maintain all Orthodox populations under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople in accordance with the provisions of Orthodox canon law. This canon law also applies to the Slav Orthodox who are established outside the territorial limits of the recognized independent churches. In this matter the Patriarch is backed by the entire Synod. The delegation, therefore, would have little chance of success if attempts were made to obtain an amendment of canon law.

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* Comment: [REDACTED] disseminated on 15 October 1946, reported that the delay in arrival of the delegation was blamed by Maximos himself on a reluctance on the part of the Turkish authorities to issue the necessary entry visas.

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